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## Autzen

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under that arrangement, 1,375 additional parking spaces would have to be found on the stadium's site under the expansion proposal, so the University has asked for a further reduction in the parking requirement.

In place of adding an expensive parking structure on stadium property or acquiring surrounding land for parking, the University has submitted a Transportation Demand Management Plan to the Eugene Planning Commission for consideration.

The city recommended several changes to the University's first proposal and a revised version is due by Friday at 5 p.m. at city offices. No University officials were available to confirm if the plan is on schedule, but Peter Koonce with Kittleson and Associates, Inc., in Portland said Wednesday, "We're working toward that deadline." Kittleson and Associates is a traffic engineering firm working with the University on the plan.

Allen Lowe, a senior planner with the city of Eugene, said that the University is intent on making this plan work because it is essential to please the 12,100 additional people who will be attending football games at Autzen. Instead of spending money unwisely, Lowe said it is to the University's advantage to splurge in different ways.

"The way you reduce demand for automobile-related facilities, such as a parking structure, is to put your money and your emphasis into how to get people in there by bikes, by transit and by walking," said Lowe, who has also been working with University officials to refine the TDM Plan.

Included in the city's recommendations to the University are an increased number of places for people to park their bicycles and restructuring pedestrian access to ensure safety along Centennial Boulevard.

One of the key ways to move those extra people into the area, Lowe said, is to increase the percentage of fans using the Lane Transit District bus system. Lowe said that the city estimates that about 40 percent of fans attending a football game at Autzen come in by car and approximately 14 percent use the bus. The TDM Plan aims for 21 percent bus usage.

"This is a big deal, [because] getting 21 percent of the 51,000 people to use the bus to get to the site is difficult," he said. "And it certainly is going to require that the buses have priority in terms of movement in this area, so that they are able to get into it and get out of it and people don't have to wait in line for two hours after a game."

Other recommendations by the city included an increase of park-and-ride locations, especially on the outskirts of town, and a stronger marketing campaign by the University to raise awareness of those spots for out-of-town fans.

Such a demand on bus service won't be met solely by LTD, said Andy Vobora, the agency's service planning and marketing manager. Lowe estimated that a squadron of about 60 buses would be needed to handle the increased passenger load, a number which Vobora said is out of reach for LTD resources.

"With football, it's become such a large operation, we can't keep up with the demands," Vobora said. He said that LTD would work with other privately-owned bus companies to help alleviate the burden.

Once in the Autzen Stadium area, however, another problem for the University arises in where to situate a bus discharge and pick-up station. Although three spots — two on University property — are

being considered, Lowe said, the preferred location for the transit station is a parking lot on WISTEC grounds, which is located across Leo Harris Parkway.

University officials have not publicly commented on which site they are proposing in the TDM Plan. But Meg Trendler, executive director for WISTEC, said that she first heard about the possibility of WISTEC's property being considered in late March. That was about three weeks after the University submitted its request for the amendment.

"I think that the [University has] been open in talking with us, but I don't think they brought us into their plans early enough," Trendler said.

For the past five years, WISTEC has sold its parking spaces with some multi-year agreements in place, and Trendler said its plans for sales had already been in progress for two months when the University contacted her.

"We have no problem with the University expanding Autzen Stadium for their fans," she said. "However, it needs to be done in a way that benefits kids who come from all over southwest Oregon to visit [WISTEC]."

Assistant Athletic Director Dave Williford said that the University has kept open lines of communication between the school and neighboring businesses in the Autzen Stadium area. In May, the department held an open house at the Casanova Center, an event that attracted a small turnout, he said.

"I think we're making good progress — lots of people have expressed concerns," Williford said.

One of those business owners in the area, Bernice Michael, submitted a letter to the city of Eugene, asking that planners reject the University's request for a code amendment. Michael said that after game days her business parking lot on Centennial Loop is strewn with trash and she has had to hire a maintenance person to clean up afterwards.

"I don't think it's going to get any better with more people and no more parking," Michael said.

Lowe said that at one point during the code amendment process, the Oregon Department of Transportation suggested a region-wide traffic analysis, with all parties — the city, the University, LTD and area businesses, among others — getting together to discuss the issue.

That process, however, would have added months onto the expansion's timetable and eventually ODOT rescinded its proposal.

"We all know if you add 12,000 seats, you're going to bring 12,000 more people here, so it's going to get worse — there is no other answer," Lowe said.

Williford said that although on game days his department is focused on the Autzen Stadium site instead of surrounding areas, the University did use aerial photography and anecdotal information when considering its TDM Plan.

When asked if CEO and President Phil Knight's decision in April to pull his reported \$30 million donation from the stadium expansion project impacted this amendment process, Williford said the University is "far enough down the path that it doesn't make sense to put a hold on it."

Once the University submits its proposal to the city, the plans become public record and can be reviewed by anyone with an interest. The public record portion will remain open until July 24, and the Planning Commission will then decide whether to OK the proposal and send it on to the City Council.



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